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**Susitna-Watana Hydroelectric Project
(FERC No. 14241)**

**Wildlife Harvest Analysis
Study Plan Section 10.20**

**Initial Study Report
Part C: Executive Summary and Section 7**

Prepared for

Alaska Energy Authority



SUSITNA-WATANA HYDRO

Clean, reliable energy for the next 100 years.

Prepared by

ABR, Inc.—Environmental Research & Services

June 2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	ii
7. Completing the Study	1
7.1. Proposed Methodologies and Modifications	1
7.1.1. Decision Points from Study Plan	1
7.1.2. Modifications to Study Plan.....	1
7.2. Schedule.....	1
7.3. Conclusion	1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wildlife Harvest Analysis 10.20	
Purpose	The purpose of this office-based study is to characterize past and current hunter effort and harvest levels in the region of the proposed Project by summarizing and analyzing data from the ADF&G harvest database for Alaska, which also includes some harvest data from subsistence users reported to USFWS.
Status	This study was rescheduled for implementation during 2015.
Study Components	<p>Methods used in this study include the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compilation and analysis of ADF&G harvest database records • Review of ADF&G management reports • Review of ADF&G trapper questionnaires • Review of ADF&G small game outlook and harvest surveys • Review of ADF&G and USFWS subsistence surveys and harvest reports • Interviews with regional biologists • Comparison of harvest patterns with development plans and the distribution of game mammals and birds
2013 Variances	The study was deferred until 2015 rather than being initiated in 2013 (RSP Section 10.20.10). AEA will meet the study objectives by completing the entire study in one study season.
Steps to Complete the Study	AEA will complete this study by analyzing existing data from the ADF&G harvest database, together with interviews with regional biologists and new data collected during in the other licensing studies. This information will be used to assess the spatial and temporal patterns and success of hunting and trapping efforts and to examine relationships between effort, harvest, and the distribution of wildlife.
Highlighted Results and Achievements	No results specific to this study have been obtained as of this ISR.

7. COMPLETING THE STUDY

7.1. Proposed Methodologies and Modifications

To complete this study, AEA will implement the methods in the Study Plan, with no modifications. These activities include the following Study Plan components, as described in RSP Section 10.20.4:

- Compilation and analysis of ADF&G harvest database records;
- Review of ADF&G management reports;
- Review of ADF&G trapper questionnaires;
- Review of ADF&G small game outlook and harvest surveys;
- Review of ADF&G and USFWS subsistence surveys and harvest reports;
- Interviews with regional biologists; and
- Comparison of harvest patterns with development plans and the distribution of game mammals and birds.

7.1.1. Decision Points from Study Plan

The FERC-approved Study Plan contained no decision points to be evaluated following the completion of the first year of study. As is described in Section 4 above, this study was not implemented in 2013 and all work is deferred to the 2015 study season.

7.1.2. Modifications to Study Plan

No modifications to the Study Plan methods are needed to complete the study and meet Study Plan objectives.

7.2. Schedule

In general, the schedule for completing the FERC-approved Study Plan depends on several factors, including Project funding levels authorized by the Alaska State Legislature, availability of required data inputs from one individual study to another, unexpected weather delays, the short duration of the summer field season in Alaska, and other events outside the reasonable control of AEA. For these reasons, the Study Plan implementation schedule is subject to change, although at this time AEA expects to complete the FERC-approved Study Plan through the filing of the Updated Study Report (USR) by February 1, 2016, in accordance with the ILP schedule issued by FERC on January 28, 2014.

With regard to this specific study, AEA expects to obtain updated harvest data and complete the data analyses in 2015, which will be reported in the USR.

7.3. Conclusion

Implementation of the Wildlife Harvest Analysis Study is planned for 2015 with no proposed modifications to FERC-approved methods. The study is interrelated with the Subsistence

Resources Study (Study 14.5) and Recreation Resources Study (Study 12.5), as the GIS database of harvest data will be used to evaluate subsistence and sport harvests and compared with other human uses of the Project area. AEA expects the approved Study Plan objectives of Study 10.20 will be achieved and reported in the USR.